



League of Women Voters of Montana

SB 46

SENATE JUDICIARY

EXHIBIT NO. 28

DATE 2/11/09

BILL NO. SB 46

2/11/2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am Rita Blouke vice-president of the Helena Area League of Women Voters, here today on behalf of the LWV of Montana, to speak in opposition to SB 46. The League is a non-partisan organization that studies issues, reaches member consensus, and then takes positions based on those areas of agreement. The League has 2 positions upon which to base our opposition.

First, the State League of Women Voters studied the Montana Constitution before the 1972 Convention and has had several reviews and updates since. The League reviews bills to amend the Montana Constitution for support or opposition. Only those bills limited to fundamental law are supported. We believe a constitution (other than the statement of rights which protects the basic principles of human liberty) should be a document that outlines the structure and functions of government. Our position states, "*The League of Women Voters of Montana supports a State Constitution limited to fundamental law, outlining the framework of government and delegating powers.*" Issues and Answers 2002, League of Women Voters of Montana, page 5. Because we do not believe this proposal reflects fundamental law, we oppose this bill.

Second, the League of Women Voters US has studied the issue of reproductive choice since 1972. We continue to believe decisions about reproductive choice must be left to women and their doctors. Our position states, "*The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.*" Impact on Issues 2006-2008, League of Women Voters of the United States, page 23. Because we believe this proposal would obliterate a pregnant woman's right to privacy, we oppose this bill.

Rita Blouke,
Legislative Steering Committee
League of Women Voters of Montana